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Individuals key to transformation success

by Gen. Lester L. Lyles, Commander, Air Force Materiel Command

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Recently, I discussed with you my expectations for Air Force Materiel Command transformation: to develop an expeditionary mindset; become more innovative, adaptive and responsive; operate more effectively and efficiently; and be easier to do business with.

These expectations enable the command's vision to provide military capabilities through superior acquisition and sustainment for Defense Department warfighters and their allies - now and in the future.

We now have more than 200 initiatives across the command to meet these expectations, and I could not be more proud of your efforts to improve our support to the warfighter!

Major efforts such as Depot Maintenance Reengineering Transformation, the Spares Campaign, Predictive Support Awareness, Agile Acquisition, Test and Evaluation Transformation, the Air Force Research Laboratory's capability integration efforts and our scientist and engineer recruiting and retention initiatives, to name a few, are leading our journey.

Divestiture of nonessential efforts has proven to be a great way to reinvest resources to provide direct payback to the warfighter. Since August, almost 300 divestiture candidates have been submitted, resulting in eliminating, improving or resolving misunderstandings for each candidate. The secretary of the Air Force and the chief of staff are our champions for these divestiture efforts, which have eliminated almost 60,000 hours of nonessential work to date.

As these initiatives continue, we are working with the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition Dr. Marvin Sambur and his team to streamline our acquisition processes. Until recently, we focused on individual weapon system programs through the Integrated Weapons System Management philosophy.

This approach proved to be very successful as a fundamental strategy to improve specific, or vertical, program life cycle management and accountability, but the increasing demands for interoperability and commonality demand a new way of doing business.

In order to meet those demands and promote horizontal integration, we developed the product enterprise concept. This approach provides integrated solutions by shifting our focus away from platform-centric thinking and toward capabilities- and effects-based thinking. To focus attention on these enterprises, our product center commanders were assigned as enterprise leaders for each product enterprise established: command and control, aeronautics, armament, and space and ballistic missiles.

This approach provided an ideal foundation for Capabilities-Based Life Cycle Management - a new direction for AFMC and SAF/AQ that will provide a set of fully supportable, integrated solutions capable of meeting the needs and effects required by the warfighter.

Our first step in this new direction is the Agile Acquisition Concept of Operations I recently signed with Dr. Sambur, which formalizes our partnership with SAF/AQ. It clearly delineates SAF/AQ's role as the lead for acquisition policy and processes and AFMC's vital role as the supporting organization providing people, resources, tools and expertise.

We are now working together with Dr. Sambur and his team to reengineer processes and implement this concept of operations in the most effective and efficient manner. Our joint goal remains unchanged: to meet the warfighter's needs!

This concept of operations and our other transformation initiatives are enabling us to continue providing world-class support in an ever-changing environment. Transformation in AFMC is not just a matter of doing things better, faster or cheaper. It is the evolution of our command to grow with the Air Force and take the necessary steps to ensure we continue to meet our warfighters' needs.

I am very excited about our future! We are well on our way in this transformation journey and there are a multitude of opportunities to progress even farther. We will meet future demands by reengineering our processes and continuing to fulfill our responsibilities to train, organize and equip an outstanding team of

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research and development, acquisition, sustainment, and test and evaluation professionals.

Our mission is complicated, yet no one in the world does it better! I hear this often from leaders across the Air Force and the warfighting commands.

We have been in operation for more than 50 years in one form or another, with processes growing to meet changing Air Force requirements. Your part in this journey is key to our success as we continue to reengineer our processes and transform AFMC to enhance our support to the warfighter. @